



STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 83720
BOISE, IDAHO 83720-0027

TOM LUNA
STATE SUPERINTENDENT
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

October 2, 2008

TO: Superintendents, Principals, Business Managers, Charter School Administrators, Title I Directors, Special Education Directors, Testing Coordinators, Technology Coordinators and Public Information Officers

FROM: Tom Luna, Superintendent of Public Instruction

RE: Weekly E-Newsletter

IN THIS REPORT:

- **Apply now for School Garden Grant**
- **School Improvement Update**
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- **Reminders**
- **Upcoming Deadlines**

APPLY NOW FOR SCHOOL GARDEN GRANT (GO TO TOP)

Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna announced this week that grants are now available for Idaho schools that want to build a school garden to help promote nutrition, science and agricultural education. Several schools across Idaho are already using school gardens to supplement student learning.

Howard Henning, a science teacher at Compass Charter School in Meridian, has used gardens in his teaching for years. "A school garden gives students the unique opportunity to apply scientific lessons learned in class to a real-world setting," Henning said. "It becomes an outdoor classroom that enhances the overall learning environment. A school garden allows students to learn, first-hand, that 'fresh' tastes better and is better for you."

Schools can apply for grants of up to \$3,000 to build a fruit and vegetable garden. A total of \$30,000 in grants is available for Idaho schools in the upcoming year. Funding for the grant is made possible by a State Department of Education Child Nutrition Programs Team Nutrition grant; therefore, nutrition education must be an important component of the garden plan. Any Idaho school participating in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National School Breakfast or School Lunch Program is eligible to apply for a grant. The application can be completed by anyone connected with the school, including foodservice employees, teachers, school administrators, parents or members of the local community. Schools are encouraged to partner with their school foodservice in the gardening plans, when possible, because the USDA allows school cafeterias to serve food grown in a school garden to students.

The State Department of Education will work with the schools that receive grants throughout the year to provide necessary technical assistance and create a best practices guide that schools across the state can use in the future to successfully incorporate gardening programs into the school curriculum. For more information on the School Garden Grant requirements or for a copy of the School Garden Grant Application, please visit www.sde.idaho.gov/site/cnp/. Grant applications must be postmarked by **October 10, 2008**.



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SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT UPDATE (GO TO TOP)

Workshop Resources

If you need a copy of the 2008-2009 School Improvement Writing Workbook, please visit the following link, where you can access a copy and other resources presented at the workshops in September:

<http://csi.boisestate.edu/School%20Improvement%20Plan%20Writing%20Workbook%202008-09.doc>

School Improvement Plans

Idaho has moved to a two-year review cycle for school improvement plans. For 2008-2009, schools and districts will need to submit a school improvement plan if they are new to Year 1 School Improvement status, were marked Needs Revision during the 2007-2008 review, or were in Year 1 School Improvement status last year and did not submit a plan. Schools can access a list of schools that need to submit school improvement plans this year at the following link:

<http://csi.boisestate.edu/2008-2009%20School%20Improvement%20Plans%20-%20School%20List.xls>.

Schools can access a list of districts that need to submit school improvement plans at this link:

<http://csi.boisestate.edu/2008-2009%20School%20Improvement%20Plans%20-%20District%20List.xls>.

Webinars

Stay tuned for upcoming registration information for the School Improvement Webinar that will be held October 28, 2008 and will highlight High Standards and Expectations for All Students through a presentation on the Three-Tiered Model of Instruction. Recognizing the vast differences in implementing tiered instruction at the elementary and secondary level, this Webinar training will be offered at 10 a.m. for elementary and 3 p.m. for secondary. Remember that all Webinars will be recorded and archived if you wish to access the information at a different time.

Please check out the new and improved School Improvement website for additional information and resources at <http://csi.boisestate.edu/improvement.htm>. If you have any questions regarding Title I School Improvement support, please contact Katherine Weatherspoon at (208) 426-4852 or Lisa Kinnaman at (208) 426-2154.

SUPERINTENDENT'S SCHEDULE (GO TO TOP)

- Superintendent Luna will speak to the Meridian Rotary Club at noon on Monday, October 6 in Meridian.
- Superintendent Luna will attend a Proclamation Signing to recognize Service Learning Week at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, October 8 in Boise.
- Superintendent Luna will attend the State Board of Education meeting on Thursday, October 9 in Lewiston.

WHAT'S NEW (GO TO TOP)

- **IRI score reporting deadline** -- The deadline to report IRI scores to the State Department of Education is October 15, 2008. If you have any questions about reporting, please contact Stephanie Martin at (208) 332-6903 or SMartin@sde.idaho.gov.



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- **We Are Family Conference** -- The 2009 We Are Family Conference for Idahoans with disabilities and their families will be held January 13-16, 2009 in Boise. The conference is sponsored by the Idaho State Independent Living Council, Idaho Parents Unlimited and the Idaho Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health. For more information, please visit <http://www.silc.idaho.gov/>.
- **Scholarships for Native American students** -- The Columbia River Professional Chapter, American Indian Science & Engineering Society is soliciting applicants for its annual college/university scholarships. Plans are to award two at \$1,000 each. The deadline for applications is **November 1, 2008**. Awards will be made by November 30, 2008. Applicants must be Native American and residing in Oregon, Washington, or Idaho. For more details and to download an application form, visit www.aisescrc.org and click on the "Scholarships" link.
- **NCLB Parent Publications** -- The NCLB Team at the State Department of Education has received a number of requests for more information about the following materials that were distributed at the NCLB Annual Title I & III Director's Meeting on September 15, 2008:
 - *Empowering Parents School Box*
 - *Ensuring Equitable Services to Private School Children* (CD)
 - *Giving Parents Options*-Strategies for informing parents and implemental Public School Choice and Supplemental Education al Services under No Child Left Behind.Documents may be ordered and sent directly to your district. Many of the documents in this "store" are available to download and/or print for free. If an item is available to download or print, a link(s) will be included on that item's Product Information screen. Items may be available in PDF, ASCII text, HTML, or Document format, and all formats may be printed or downloaded. Please visit <http://edpubs.ed.gov/> to learn more. This has been a great resource for districts. Use the search function to find specific items. Please contact Claudia Striegel with the NCLB Team at cstriegel@sde.idaho.gov if you have any questions.
- **Deadline extended for Special Olympics course** – Northwest Nazarene University is offering graduate credit for all educators who teach the 2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games K-12 curriculum, which has been mailed to all public and private Idaho schools. The deadline to enroll in the course has now been extended until **October 6, 2008**. The course, titled Ed 550 Education to Make a Difference, is designed as a learning team, essentially an independent study where educators teach a series of three concise and engaging K-12 lessons about valuing diversity through involvement with the Special Olympics. To register, please visit <https://www.nnu.edu/cereg>.
- **NASA Webcast for students** -- The producers of the new PBS documentary *The Journey to Palomar* and the NASA Ames Research Center will present a live interactive NASA Webcast for students at 11 a.m. (Pacific Time) on Wednesday, October 8, 2008. The Webcast is titled: "George Ellery Hale's Legacy and the Future of Giant American Telescopes." To participate, please visit <http://quest.nasa.gov/lunar/palomar/>. The *Journey to Palomar* is the story of American astronomer George Ellery Hale's struggle to build the four largest telescopes in the world, which set the stage for astronomy and space exploration throughout the 20th century. A comprehensive Teacher Guide (free download) accompanies the documentary at pbs.org in November.
- **National Schools of Character award** -- Schools can apply to be named a National School or District of Character by the Character Education Partnership (CEP). Every year, CEP names approximately 10 schools and/or districts



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(K-12) as National Schools of Character (NSOC). The purpose of the award is to honor these exemplars and facilitate their leadership in the field of character education. Award winners receive up to \$10,000 to fulfill their role as ambassadors of character education. Visit www.character.org/nsoc for more information. Applications are due **December 8, 2008**.

REMINDERS (GO TO TOP)

- **Lincoln Bicentennial** -- Schools have several opportunities to take part in the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial celebration. Here are some of the ways in which schools can participate: collect Pennies for Lincoln, enter the Abraham Lincoln Essay Contest, access the available lesson plans, participate in a teacher seminar, view the Lincoln Traveling Museum Exhibit. Visit http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/social_studies/ to learn more.
- **Reminder about Fingerprinting** -- Idaho law requires that all certificated and non-certificated employees hired on or after July 1, 2008, and other individuals who are required by the provisions of Idaho Code 33-130 to undergo a criminal history check shall submit a completed ten (10) finger fingerprint card or scan to the State Department of Education no later than five (5) days following the first day of employment or unsupervised contact with students in a K-12 setting, whichever is sooner.
- **New payment process Background Records Office** -- The State Department of Education has approved a new payment process for the Background Records Office, which is designed to assist the districts in meeting the five-day submission requirement. The new process allows a district to make advance deposits to cover fingerprinting to the Background Records Office. As fingerprints are received from the district, the processing fees will be subtracted from the balance of the prepaid account. Districts will be notified when the account is getting low on funds. For more information, please contact Shannon Haas at the Department at (208) 332-6888 SHHaas@sde.idaho.gov or Cathi Day (208)332-6883 at CJDay@sde.idaho.gov.
- **Virtues Conference 2008** -- Northwest Nazarene University and the Idaho ASCD invite teachers, counselors and administrators to participate in the Virtues conference, which will be held November 20-21, 2008 on the NNU campus in Nampa. Inspiring speakers and founders of The Virtues Project Linda Kavelin Popov and Dr. Dan Popov will help you create a school environment that includes: student leadership, stress reduction for test fatigue, creating an environment for academic excellence, a 90-day plan for positive change and ways to transform classroom and school violence to virtues. To find out more about and to register for the conference go to <http://www.nnu.edu/virtues>.
- **Education News Parents Can Use** -- The U.S. Department of Education hosts a regular TV series about ways to ensure children's educational success. The next "Education News Parents Can Use" broadcast, focusing on safeguarding America's colleges, is scheduled for October 21, 2008 (8 p.m. ET). For more information, please visit <http://www.ed.gov/edtv/>.
- **ASVAB** -- The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) program is one way to help students identify a future career path. The ASVAB program is a comprehensive career exploration and planning program that includes a multiple-aptitude test battery, interest inventory and various career planning tools designed to help the student explore the world of work. The program is free of charge. Please consider using ASVAB in your school



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or school district. For more information, you can contact: David Hodson, at (208) 334-1450 ext. 213 or david.a.hodson@mepcom.army.mil or Colleen Owen at (208) 334-1450 ext.214 or colleen.owen@mepcom.army.mil. Schools in Northern Idaho, north of New Meadows should call Fred Bernize at (509) 353 3105 ext. 242 or fred.bernize@mepcom.army.mil.

- **Spanish for working professionals** – Northwest Nazarene University Center for Professional Development is offering “Introduction to Spanish for the Working Professional,” a course designed to introduce working professionals to the fundamentals of cross-cultural communication and establish strong speaking, reading, listening and writing skills in Spanish. Online registration and more information can be found at www.nnu.edu/pdcourses or by calling (208) 467-8495.
- **Early Years 2008 conference** – The Early Years 2008 conference will be held November 18-19, 2008 at Boise State University for parents and early childhood professionals from an array of disciplines. The conference will highlight the many interrelated aspects of growth that impact a child’s development. For more information or to register, please visit www.idahochild.org.
- **Project Learning Tree workshops** – Project Learning Tree (PLT)/Idaho is offering a semester of professional development opportunities for teachers. Each workshop is available for one graduate level professional education credit (for recertification and pay-scale movement) from a choice of universities – \$60. To enroll, send \$20 workshop fee per workshop (NOTE: Focus on Lit is \$25) to PLT at 350 N 9th St., #304, Boise ID 83702. Indicate the workshop(s) you wish to attend, and provide your contact information. We’ll send you a memo with workshop details. Visit <http://www.idahoforests.org/plt1.htm> to see a full list of workshops.
- **Curricular Materials Caravan** – The Curricular Materials Caravan will start traveling throughout the state in October for newly approved math and professional-technical education materials. Please visit http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/meetings_events/ to learn more and to view dates and locations of the Caravan.
- **Introduction to Service Learning** – The State Department of Education’s Learn and Serve program is hosting a Webinar about service learning from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. (MT) on October 2, 2008 and 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. (MT) on October 3, 2008. To access the session, please visit http://67.202.210.70/launcher.cgi?room=SDE_Innovation. The Webinar is open to anyone interested in service learning for grades K-12. If you have questions, please contact Learn and Serve Coordinator Cheryl Kary at (208) 332-6913 or CMKary@sde.idaho.gov.
- **Secretary of State offers opportunity for 17-year-old students** – In Idaho, if a student is 17 years old and a U.S. citizen, they can serve as a poll worker on Election Day. Please visit <http://www.idahovotes.gov/Clerk.htm> to find out how you can contact your local county clerk and ask for more information. Student poll workers are paid for their time.
- **Register for School Improvement webinars** – Webinars are available for Title I schools and districts that have been identified for school improvement Alert, Year 1, Year 2, Corrective Action, or Restructuring based on the Spring 2008 ISAT scores. Please visit <http://csi.boisestate.edu/sessionregistration.htm> to register or to learn more. If you have questions, please contact Katherine Weatherspoon at the (208) 426-4852.



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- **2008 Idaho Student Mock Election** – Secretary of State Ben Ysursa invites your high school to participate in the 2008 Idaho Student Mock Election. This online voting exercise has been developed in cooperation with the State Department of Education to instill an appreciation and importance of voting in Idaho's young people. Any high school government class is welcome to participate. The 2008 Idaho Student Mock Election will be available for two days only: Thursday, October 23 and Friday, October 24. For more details, please visit <http://www.sos.idaho.gov/isme/ISMEIndex.jsp>. To participate, please e-mail a list of interested teachers and their school e-mail addresses to isme@sos.idaho.gov or call (208) 334-2852.

UPCOMING DEADLINES (GO TO TOP)

- **Oct. 3, 2008** – The final day to fill out the online survey about Response to Intervention in your school and district. It is open to anyone who works with children in our schools. Your input is valued and important and will give us needed information about your level of implementation and requirements in regards to RtI. Visit <http://survey.idahotc.com/TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=180L459> to fill out the survey.
- **Oct. 3, 2008** – The deadline for school districts and charter schools to submit the first 2008-2009 Bus Ridership Count. The Bus Ridership Count will report the number of eligible students riding school buses during the week of September 15 – 19, 2008. The Bus Ridership Count form and supporting documents may be found at <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/transportation/> and click on Access Reports. If you have any questions, please contact Lanette Daw at (208) 332-6851 or Ldaw@sde.idaho.gov.
- **Oct. 15, 2008** – The deadline for schools to register for the National Geographic Bee, a contest designed to encourage teachers to include geography in their classrooms, spark student interest in the subject, and increase public awareness about geography. Principals of schools with any of the grades 4-8 are eligible to register their schools to receive contest materials for a school-level Bee. For complete information on the Bee, visit www.nationalgeographic.com/geographicbee.
- **Oct. 15, 2008** – The deadline for school districts to submit the Annual Title I-A Comparability Report. This is an annual requirement for all Districts. The forms can be found at http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/title_one/#annual_reports and must be submitted as email attachments and sent to Susan Hansen at SCHansen@sde.idaho.gov. Minor changes have been made to the forms; if there are questions please contact Susan at (208) 332-6900.
- **Oct. 15, 2008** – The deadline for schools to let the Idaho Commission on the Arts they are interested in participating in the statewide Poetry Out Loud competition, which will culminate in a state final on February 21, 2009 in Boise. Poetry Out Loud was created by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation and is administered by the state art agencies of all 50 states. Schools can fax or e-mail their commitments to the Idaho Commission on the Arts at (208) 334-2488 or e-mail intern@arts.idaho.gov.
- **Oct. 20, 2008** – The deadline for schools or districts to submit a Letter of Intent to apply for FY2011 Safe Routes to School (SR2S) program funds. SR2S projects may include engineering solutions and must include education, enforcement, encouragement and evaluation efforts. Eligible applicants may be state or local governmental and/or non-profit organizations. For more information, visit www.itd.idaho.gov/srts/howtoapply.html.



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- **Oct. 24, 2008** – The deadline for submissions in the 2008 Holiday Card Contest. Each year, the State Department of Education sponsors a Holiday Card contest to draw attention to art programs in Idaho's elementary schools. One drawing is selected for the Department's holiday greeting. The child who submits the selected artwork receives cards for his or her own use. Visit www.sde.idaho.gov and click on "Holiday Card Contest" under the Latest News heading to learn more.
- **Oct. 29, 2008** – The deadline to enter the Idaho State Historical Society's photography contest to recognize Idaho Archaeology and Historic Preservation Month. Idaho Archaeology and Historic Preservation Month will highlight the work of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in Idaho. The submitted image should show a WPA project, demonstrate the success of the WPA, speak to the magnitude of the WPA, and/or illustrate its importance in Idaho. The competition is open to Idaho high school and college students. For more information, please visit www.idahohistory.net or contact Shelby Day at (208) 334-3847 ext. 109 or shelby.day@ishs.idaho.gov.
- **Oct. 31, 2008** – The deadline for school districts and charter schools to submit the 2007-2008 IFARMS Annual Financial Report as required by Idaho Code 33-701(7). The IFARMS Annual Financial Report forms and supporting documents can be found at http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/finance_tech/ifarms_forms.htm. If you have any questions, please contact Julie Oberle at (208) 332-6840 or JAOberle@sde.idaho.gov.
- **Oct. 31, 2008** – The deadline to submit materials for the U.S. Senate Youth Program. Each year, two outstanding student leaders from Idaho are selected as delegates to the program where they will travel to Washington, D.C. with all expenses paid and view their federal government in action, meet with national leaders on Capitol Hill, at the White House, the Supreme Court, the Pentagon and the State Department. Each student also receives a one-time \$5,000 undergraduate college scholarship from the William Randolph Hearst Foundation. If you have any questions, please contact Amanda Salazar at (208) 332-6974.
- **Nov. 3, 2008** – The deadline to submit applications for the third annual BubbleWrap® Competition for Young Inventors, sponsored by the Sealed Air Corporation and The National Museum of Education. The contest is open to students in grades 5-8. This innovative contest incorporates national and state academic standards in the fields of engineering design, problem-solving, entrepreneurship and all of the core curricular subjects. Visit www.nmoe.org for more details about the competition. Applications may be received via hard copy mail, email or FAX. If you have further questions, please contact the National Museum of Education at info@nmoe.org or (330) 376-8300.
- **Nov. 7, 2008** – The deadline for elementary schools to apply for a chance to receive one of ten \$15,000 grants from the makers of Hidden Valley® Salad Dressings. Each grant award will support an elementary school in developing a program offering fresh vegetables and fruits lasting through the 2009-10 school year. Each school grant will consist of \$15,000 in direct funding, and a one-time donation of Hidden Valley® Original Ranch® Light Dressing. Funding must be spent on any of the following: Fresh produce, a vegetable station, kitchen equipment, program staffing, nutrition education supplies and/or training. All proposals must be submitted online at www.LoveYourVeggiesGrants.org.
- **Nov. 10, 2008** – The deadline for school districts and charter schools to submit the 2007-2008 Independent Audit Report. Idaho Code 33-701(6), which requires submission of the independent audit report, was modified during the 2008 Legislative Session. Not only was the due date changed from October 15 to November 10, but penalties for



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late submission were also added. If the SDE has not received your report on or before November 10, your November 15 foundation payment may be withheld until the report is received. Please work with your auditor and school board to ensure submission prior to November 10. If you have any questions, please contact Julie Oberle at (208) 332-6840 or JAOberle@sde.idaho.gov.

- **Nov. 14, 2008 -- The deadline to apply for the** National Excellence in Urban Education Award. The award recognizes the dedication and talent of urban school educators and students, provides a benchmark of excellence that motivates reform efforts and deepens the knowledge base of best practices for promoting urban school transformation. For more information or to apply, please visit <http://www.ncust.org>.
- **Nov. 28, 2008** – The deadline to enter into the Council for America's First Freedom's 16th annual First Freedom Student Competition. The competition is a national essay contest that offers students in grades 9-12 an opportunity to compete for a \$3,000, \$1,500 or \$750 award as they examine the First Amendment and the history and relevance of religious freedom in America and the world today. For more information on this competition, please visit www.firstfreedom.org. Registration is due by Monday, November 24, 2008, and the postmark entry deadline is November 28, 2008.
- **Jan. 20, 2008** -- The deadline for students to enter the C-SPAN "StudentCam" national video documentary competition, which is open to middle school and high school students (grades 6-12). This year C-SPAN asks students to create a 5- to 8-minute video documentary that addresses an issue of national significance. For more information, please visit www.studentcam.org. If you have any questions, e-mail emartin@c-span.org or call (800) 523-7586.
- **Jan. 30, 2009** – The Idaho Dropout Summit has been scheduled at the Nampa Civic Center in Nampa. More details to come.